The Mesquakies of Iowa

The Mesquakies of Iowa

A Summary of Findings of

THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

The University of Chicago — State University of Iowa

MESQUAKIE INDIAN PROJECT

Directed by SOL TAX

Published by The Federated Women's Clubs of Iowa

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO — STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
Mesquakie Indian Project

DIRECTOR, SOL TAX
Professor of Anthropology, the University of Chicago

ARIANE BRUNEL, Barnard College

CARL COUCH, State University of Iowa

LLOYD W. FALLERS, Princeton University

FRED GEARING, University of Chicago

MARJORIE GEARING, Chicago

IRVING GERICK, Chicago

GRACE GREDYS HARRIS, Cambridge University, England

RICHARD KLUCKHOLM, University of Chicago

CHARLES LESLIE, University of Chicago

WILLIAM McCORMACK, Grundy Center, Iowa

LISA PEATTIE, University of Chicago

STEVEN POLGAR, University of Chicago

ROBERT RIETZ, Fort Berthold Reservation, North Dakota

CAROL RUPPE, Iowa City, Iowa

REYNOLD RUPPE, State University of Iowa

LUCINDA SANGREE, University of Chicago

WALTER SANGREE, University of Chicago

DAVIDA WOLFFSON, University College, London, England

WALTER B. MILLER
Harvard University

Financial Contributions

TAMA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Contents . . .

I. The Past: A Nation Survives 1

II. The Present:
What They Now Want to See 9

III. Five Areas of Discontent 15

IV. Rights and Duties 26

V. Mesquakies As a Racial Minority 32

VI. The Human Element 33

VII. The Children's Children 39

Preface . . .

The thoughts in the pages which follow are intended as the first words of a debate, nothing more. We hope and trust these thoughts will be greatly improved as others, Mesquakies and white men, join actively in the debate.

The thoughts which follow have arisen because both Mesquakies and other Iowans feel that, somehow, somewhere, there is a problem in the present life of the Mesquakie community. We attempt here to locate that problem and to see what might be done about it.

As it turns out, the problem is not to change the Mesquakie community in any basic way at all. It is very fine just as it is. The problem is not **in** the Mesquakie community nor is it **in** the surrounding white society; it is **between** these two. The problem is to get both Mesquakies and white men to come to understand a little about each other, enough to make possible a few mutual adjustments. Basic changes are, fortunately, unnecessary.

Those minor adjustments do bring us to consider certain "hard" matters of money—community income and federal financing of two services beyond the means of the community. But these matters, though very important, are, nevertheless, minor when one considers the community and its total life.

The central fact about the relations between Indians and White men in Iowa is this: there is no conflict of interest. Mesquakies do not want to take away any material things now held by White men and white Iowans do not want to take anything now owned by Mesquakies. For this Iowa may be glad! There are areas where such is not the case. But because such is the case in Iowa, we can be optimistic about the continued improvement of Indian-white relations. It might very well be that in the future people might discover that Iowa pointed the way for the whole nation. Because of the relative simplicity of the problem in Iowa, Iowans might be the first to see the important features of Indian-white relations. Seeing more clearly, Iowans will act more soundly and more consistently than others have and take the first great steps toward the solution of this troublesome national problem.

The pages which follow are the results of efforts by many social scientists from the University of Chicago who have been working in the Mesquakie community and in Chicago since 1948. In the summer of 1953 the State University of Iowa joined that program of study and joint efforts are continuing.

New skills had to be learned

—Photo Des Moines Register

I. THE PAST: A Nation Survives

Ever since the coming of the white man, Mesquakies have been struggling for survival. It can now be said that the struggle of the "People of the Red Earth" has been won.

The Mesquakies entered written history in 1636. When the first of the French traders came upon them, they numbered two thousand and were living near Green Bay, Wisconsin. They had a chief and a tribal council; but the right to make important decisions lay, then as now, in the agreement of all the people. The people earned their living then by hunting and during the summer months the women and children raised corn, beans, and squash in small gardens. There were rounds of religious activities during the warm months as each family group took its turn as host in the festivals. There were frequent sportive events when people would come from other tribes to watch and play lacrosse. There was warfare too, generally small-scale raids on the villages of hostile tribes or defenses against similar raids. When winter came, life was less exciting; with the first freeze, the village broke up and small family groups set out to follow the hunt. With the coming of spring, the people returned to their village completing the yearly cycle.

Their way of life was well fitted to the wooded environment and probably would have continued with little change to this day had not the "mukoman" (the Mesquakies' name for the white man) come. When the mukoman did arrive with his more complicated way of life, the Mesquakies did not start thinking about changing. Few Mesquakies think they should change even today.

The Struggle was for the Survival of a Way of Life

The Mesquakies never struggled simply to save their lives. Nor did they ever see themselves as struggling upward from a less desirable to a more desirable way of life. To Mesquakies that struggle has always been a matter of giving in in necessary small ways to the white man—doing

the small things that would make posssible the survival of their community and its way of life.

The small changes Mesquakies made in order to live side-by-side with the powerful white men were neither few nor easy. They could not live by hunting anymore and new skills had to be learned. Their land was almost boundless before but they had to learn how to live on a few thousand acres. Before they were free to do whatever the people decided, now they often had to do things the white men thought best. The changes were difficult but invariably they were small and superficial.

The fundamental elements of Mesquakies ways — the ideas about how a good man must act — are substantially the same today as they were in 1636.

For example, no Mesquakie will ever decide a matter on behalf of his group, whether the group be the whole tribe or some smaller group within the tribe. Mesquakies believe that important matters should not be decided as long as anyone strongly disagrees and to do otherwise would be, for them, fundamentally indecent.

This is seen at every hand in the every-day life of the Mesquakie community. In the first months of 1953, a group of Mesquakie veterans of World War II were at work building a meeting place for their American Legion Post. The reluctance of any of the men to make even minor decisions without the approval of the whole group would have been astounding to any outside observer. That reluctance applied equally to men who held offices in the group and those who did not. At every step along the way, the group as a whole would meet and make the decisions that arose, great and small, and it was clear that every member of the group felt it would be fundamentally wrong for them to do otherwise.

The contrast between this white-like activity and the traditional Mesquakie way in which the people go about carrying on that activity points to the ways Mesquakies have changed and the ways they have not changed at all and, for all we know, never will change. In many areas of

Mesquakie life, **what** is being done is very white-like. But in all those activities, the way it is being done is basically Mesquakie.

Most Mesquakies still have faith in the rightness of their ways. This is the unchanging heart of the Mesquakie way of life. An important part of the Mesquakie struggle was for the survival of such ideas about goodness. They did not fight, simply; they fought the **good** fight and it is clear today that they are winning.

The First Hundred Years: WAR

The history of the Mesquakies' struggle began with the coming of the French traders. There followed a hundred years of war and chaos.

During the first hundred years there was a general shifting of Indian tribes westward due to the settlement of whites on the east coast. Also tribes were pitted against tribes by the English and French who were at war at the time. The Mesquakies were located in sections strategic to the fur trade route and they were a people not given to subservience; hence they were caught up in a series of disastrous wars with the French and France's Indian allies. In 1712 they were almost wiped out near the present city of Detroit in what, to all appearances, was an unprovoked attack by French and Indians. The French set out to exterminate them a few years later and the Mesquakies suffered another series of serious defeats. In 1734 the tribe made an alliance with the Sacs which remained in force for over 100 years. At times during these costly wars, Mesquakies were reduced to only a few families but as they neared extinction, other tribes returned captured Mesquakies. By the time Americans came on the scene, Mesquakie numbers had returned to the original 2,000.

With the American revolution, the territorial struggles of European powers in the Great Lakes area came to a halt and with that, the period of war and chaos ended.

The Second Hundred Years: RETREAT

Soon, however, an equally great threat to the Mesquakies became apparent. The pressure of settlers began steadily to increase and the hunting lands of the Mesquakies fast became occupied and deforested. There followed a steady movement of Mesquakies and Sacs southward and westward along both the Illinois and Iowa banks of the Mississippi.

At the beginning of the Black Hawk war in 1831, those Mesquakies who were in Illinois moved across the Mississippi into Iowa. Fifteen years later the tribe was removed from Iowa by the armies and placed on a government reservation in Kansas.

For ten years, the people lived under increasing governmental pressures aimed at enforced Americanization — the Mesquakies would call it "mukomanization," white-manization. The most disquieting pressure at the time was the attempt to divide the reservation land and give some to each Mesquakie individual which, the government supposed, would result in individualism. [1] Keokuk, the government-recognized chief of the allied Sacs and Mesquakies was a Sac. Keokuk yielded to the government proposal. Mesquakies feared the eventual loss of the land if it was divided but their opposition was unrepresented.

---

1. What such forced allotment of tribal lands to individuals **did** result in, in the case of the Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma, was a tragic demoralization. The competent and efficient tribal governments of those groups disintegrated and the people slipped into a despondency that is reflected even today in the inordinate number of welfare cases among the present day descendents. It is reasonably safe to say that, whenever a group of people resist such a proposal strongly, there are real and important reasons for that resistance even though the reasons might not be clear at the time. One would have to be extremely wise or extremely rash to predict the outcome of such forced changes.

THE THIRD HUNDRED YEARS:

A New Beginning and New Trials

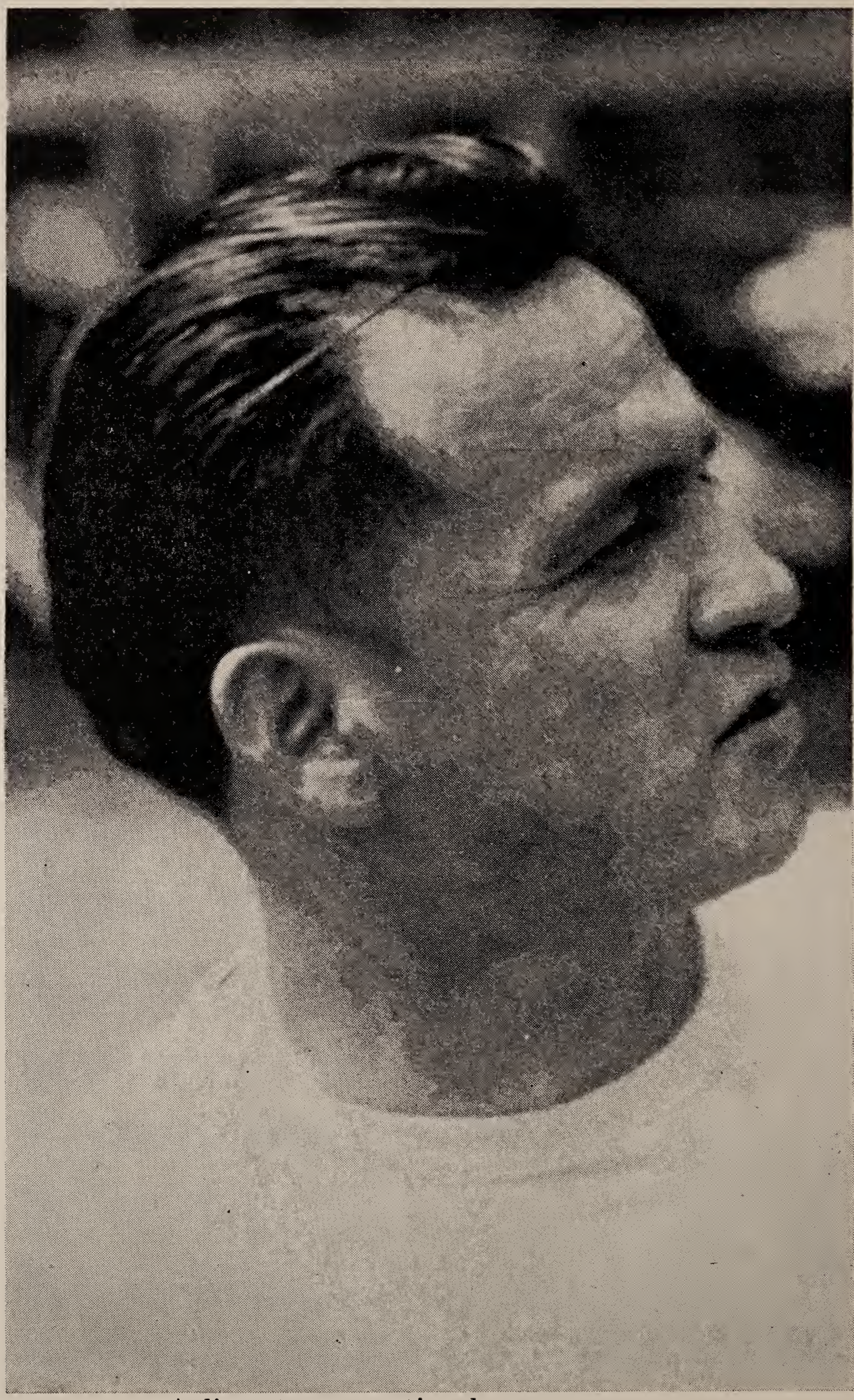
The Mesquakies under their own chief, Maminwanige, became restive. When their opposition to the government plans continued to be unheeded, they got together in 1854 and made a decision which was to prove the most important single event in the long 300 year struggle. They sent a small band back to their former homelands in Iowa to search for a place to live.

The band met a decent reception in Iowa. They were able to sell their ponies and buy 80 acres along the Iowa River in the present Tama County and they obtained permission from the Governor to settle. The Mesquakies in Kansas joined the group a few at a time and some Mesquakies who had earlier separated from the tribe and had never left Iowa now rejoined the group. Now and again the tribe was able to buy more land. For 40 years they lived thus, a perilous existence materially but free, for all practical purposes, from government pressures.

The small community "took root" in Iowa and the population which had by then dropped to about 200 began to increase. It was during these first years in Iowa that the necessary, small changes in their ways of life were made. Mesquakies learned to make their living by working for pay rather than hunting and they became accustomed to living within the confines of a small tract of land. The foundations of the present Mesquakie community were laid and those foundations have not changed appreciably to this day.

Surrounding white communities were only beginning to form during that period. In a real sense the Indian and white communities grew up together. Gradually, however, the frontier life of the nearby white communities changed. And with that change, citizens groups came into being with the purpose of changing the Mesquakie ways.

As a result, largely, of the insistance of such organizations, the federal government resumed direct authority



A literate generation has grown up

—Photo Richard Kluckholm

over the Mesquakies. This was in 1896 and from that time on there has been a continuous, stepped-up exertion of pressure aimed at forcing upon Mesquakies white ways of thinking and acting. The Mesquakie response has been a more or less passive resistance.

With the resumption of direct federal authority school attendance became compulsory. That evoked a bitter struggle within the Mesquakie community and the struggle continued until it became apparent to everyone in the tribe that education itself was a tool in the fight for survival. In 1910, the government renewed pressure for dividing tribal land and giving it to individuals and was defeated by the all-but unanimous opposition of the people. In 1934 the government proposed the political reorganization of the tribe, the replacing of the traditional council and chief with an elected body. That gained the support of a bare majority of the community and was put into effect. In 1941 a tribal court was established which was doomed to failure since in order for a court to function one Mesquakie must stand in judgment of another Mesquakie and that seems to the tribe immoral. The court failed and was abolished in 1942. In 1947 pressures were evoked in Congress to give the state government jurisdiction over Mesquakie petty criminal law. That carried over the opposition of the Mesquakies and Indian Service officials. In 1952 the Indian Service attempted to transfer the running of the Mesquakie grade school to the state but that was blocked by the State's refusal to accept the responsibility in the face of Mesquakie opposition.

The primary effect of these last 100 years has been, rather than any great change in the heart of Mesquakie way of life, an increased Mesquakie consciousness of the small and superficial changes necessary to cope with the white world. A literate generation has grown up — a generation that can read the treaties.

The heart of the Mesquakie way, their ideas about how good Mesquakies should act toward one another, remains.

Mesquakies will remain Mesquakies

If there was doubt a generation ago that the people have won this struggle for the survival of their community and the heart of its way of life, there is no doubt possible today.

The struggle will continue as long as the pressures upon the community continue. Today the Indian Service still wants to "mukomanize" the Indians and break up their communities and the American people have, in general, never yet given serious thought to the possibility of any destiny for Indian communities other than "mukomanization."

But there is little doubt as to what the final outcome of the struggle will be. Mesquakies will remain Mesquakies as long as they choose to do so. No plan the white world can adopt (short of forceful dispersion of the community) can guarantee to change that. The crime is that so much energy of both whites and Mesquakies should be wasted so pointlessly.

We look back over Mesquakie history and the main theme, a struggle for survival, is unmistakable. We should not, however, assume that the broad sweep of that history was always equally clear to Mesquakies as they lived with that history swirling about them. Not every Mesquakie recognizes, even today, the main theme of the history or the fact that the struggle has indeed been won. It is of course true that under such terrible pressure Mesquakies' faith in the rightness of their ways was sometimes shaken and remains shakable today. It is equally true that in the many strategems Mesquakies employed through the years there was a large element of muddling through. Nevertheless, the sequence of those past events do add up to an epic struggle.

There was one factor in the Mesquakies' favor throughout that struggle. White men underestimated the strength of the core of Mesquakie ways and they failed to recognize just how much change they were expecting.

The extreme reluctance of every Mesquakie to take any action affecting the group so long as any member of the group strongly disagrees has been referred to earlier. That feeling pervades all Mesquakie life. It means, in effect, that there is nothing like a foreman or a mayor or a policeman or an employer in Mesquakie life; there is nothing in Mesquakie life even resembling the "boss" positions so prevalent and so "natural" in the white world.

White men can best get an impression of the great change they expected, heretofore, in the heart of the Mesquakie way of life by turning the table — by trying to imagine how one would go about "indianizing" a white village. Try to imagine setting out to abolish every position of authority in a small white town and still keep the town running. Try to imagine handling law and order without policemen and judges or try to imagine collecting taxes by unanimous agreement. Of course the change could not be engineered.

And yet the opposite change has invariably been considered "just a matter of time" — Mesquakies were to become "mukomanized" with, at most, a bit of help here and a nudge or two there and "one more generation." It did not occur and there is today no clear evidence that it inevitably will occur.

II. THE PRESENT: What They Now Want To See

The Mesquakies are winning their struggle for the survival of their community and their ways. But today the Mesquakie people want white men to realize that fact and accept it as a good thing. The Mesquakies need to be thought of as a **permanent** community.

We are so often misled by our American experience of the "melting pot." One thing should never be forgotten. Europeans who have made up that melting pot came to this country in search for a new life. But Mesquakies did not immigrate, they did not feel that their earlier existence was inadequate, and they were not out in search of something new. This should make us hesitate to apply the experience

The land is home and a refuge—a place of safety —Photo Richard Kluckholm

of the melting pot in our predictions about the future of American Indian communities. And we can add the fact that the changes Mesquakies would have to make, did they so desire, would be incomparably greater than those made by our immigrants, whose ways of life, after all, were basically the same as those of the American. There are greater differences between the ways of present-day Americans and Mesquakies than between the ways of Americans and Egyptians.

The "Rich" Mesquakie Community

The present Mesquakie settlement covers 3,300 acres along the Iowa River in Tama County. The land is either hilly and wooded or low and subject to yearly floods. It is not valuable land economically. But to Mesquakies, it is a home and a refuge—a place of safety. The purchase of the first of those acres marked the end of many years of wandering. The people sold their ponies in order to buy the land and in the buying of it they acquired a permanent home no longer subject to the whims of white armies and white settlers. They bought the land for the tribe collectively and the land is still owned by the tribal body. Each man can use a plot for his home, his garden, and for a bit of farming but it still belongs to the tribe.

As "home" the land is to Mesquakies what home is to every man, the known and familiar. Children grow up here, and this is the place which they know. They know the roads and the short-cut paths, each small frame house and who lives there; they know the bridge where the couples meet at night, the spots in the river which are good for fishing, the government school, the cemeteries, the little store, the pow wow grounds.

But the community is not only a tract of land and a set of landmarks. It is also a group of people, known to each other personally, loving, hating, helping, hurting one another, remembering and dreaming, feeling themselves to share a life and a history. This is "we" Mesquakies against

"you" outsiders. It is a people and a way of life — a small society.

The heart of the Mesquakie ways go on. Mesquakies today avoid arguments with other Mesquakies, just as they must have been doing before the Pilgrims landed. A Mesquakie is still open-handed to his friends and relatives to a degree that makes it impossible for him to be a successful businessman in dealing with other Mesquakies; it is as if the people had made a conscious choice that they would rather be generous than rich. Men still are highly reluctant to move into a position where they seem to be putting themselves above their fellows and instructing them or deciding matters for them.

These patterns of behavior, which contrast so strongly with white notions of proper behavior, make the Mesquakie community something more than a matter of familiarity. White men leave the familiar places of their childhood with little more than an occasional tinge of homesickness. A Mesquakie who leaves the Mesquakie community enters a world of **new** behavior in which he feels himself a stranger. For this reason the "boundaries" of the Mesquakie community are much more definite than the boundaries marking off home from the "outside" for the white man.

The community, too, is a group with a language which sets it off from other groups. The Mesquakie language is spoken universally; the child does not learn English until he enters school and it always remains for him a learned, alien tongue. Mesquakies often remark how tiring it is for them to converse for more than a few minutes in English and one often gets the impression that the thoughts they are trying to get across simply do not translate into that learned language.

And finally, life in the community is a series of familiar events that have no parallel outside the community. During the summer months, there is the round of religious feasts and dances. There are frequent informal recreational events—sports during the warm months, dancing and traditional indoor games during the colder months. When-

ever a Mesquakie dies there follows a formal adoption feast when children may adopt a ceremonial parent, or brothers adopt a brother, or parents a child. And every year there is the gala highpoint of the Mesquakie year, the pow wow.

Men go out every day to their jobs in the factories, wearing every-day clothes and driving Chevrolets. They earn U.S. dollars and shop in the supermarket. But, beyond these things they know all those other things and all those other things add up to a richness in Mesquakie everyday life which is the equal of life in white communities. These are the rewards in the life of every Mesquakie which the tribe struggled for 300 years to keep. These are the rewards which Mesquakies hope whites will come to recognize and appreciate.

A Permanent Community

Because life in the Mesquakie community is rewarding, the community is permanent. A community breaks down when its ways no longer serve the needs of its people.

The increasing Mesquakie population is itself evidence of the community's permanence. In 1910 there were 257 Mesquakies; today there are over 500 living in the community and another 120 who live (only a few say "permanently") in the cities of Iowa.

The population will continue to increase. The community is young—almost half its members are under 18. As medical services become more available to the people, deaths will occur later in life and the rate of increase will inevitably turn still further upward.

The community is permanent and growing. But white men almost invariably consider Indians to be vestiges of once-mighty populations, vestiges which will inevitably either die out or be lost in the stream of American life. These notions are apparently not true for Indians of the United States generally; the population of Indian communities across the land is steadily and rapidly rising and those figures do not include those Indians who as individuals leave the reservations and cease, in effect to be Indians.

The Mesquakie population is increasing

—Photo Des Moines Register

And those notions are certainly not true when applied to the Mesquakies.

But those false notions affect the actions of white men in their dealings with Mesquakies. If Mesquakies are held to be in the process of an inevitable absorption into the larger society, then the Mesquakie community is seen, in effect, as a second-rate white community that has not yet "arrived." Similarly, Mesquakie individuals are measured one against the other in terms of the distance they have traveled toward the white man's ways. Within that frame of thought, the only actions which enter the minds of sympathetic white people are actions designed to hasten the alleged, inevitable change.

Mesquakies often resent such actions. For one thing, most Mesquakies do not consider the change itself as an unmixed blessing. But more importantly, such actions indicate clearly to Mesquakies that the white men remain blind to the merits of the heart of the Mesquakie ways.

The people are winning their struggle for the survival of their community and their ways but they have only begun their struggle for acceptance. It is unfortunate that every white Iowan could not sit unseen and watch the mirth of a "squaw-dice" game or watch the solemnity of a ceremonial adoption. If that were possible, the struggle for acceptance would be won already.

III FIVE AREAS OF DISCONTENT

Life for Mesquakies is rich in ways the white man can but dimly appreciate. That is not to say the people do not have their normal share of everyday problems. Those problems are like the problems of many white villages and towns but the unchanging heart of Mesquakie ways and the position of Mesquakies as a minority group create special dimensions. Any solutions must be in terms of those special factors.

1. Health and Medical Services

The most important need of the community, in the eyes

of the Mesquakies themselves, is an improvement in the present medical services. It is an uncomplicated problem, one that could be resolved with little expenditure of time or money.

At present the federal government spends about $7,000 a year for health services to the community. There is a physician under part-time contract and the federal government has arrangements with hospitals for the care of Mesquakies without means to bear the expenses of their hospitalization.

But the present system falls short in three ways. First, in event of emergency illnesses, the necessary medical attention is more often than not lacking or too delayed to prevent death or serious disability. There were five infant deaths in the seven months between September, 1952 and March 1953; of these deaths, two could have been almost certainly avoided.

When an infant is ill, its mother can hardly be expected to judge the seriousness of the illness. It happens, therefore, that the contract doctor is often called in cases where there is no true emergency. The doctor's practice is large and the demands on his time limitless. It is expectable that he will often refuse to make dubious emergency calls in cases where a real emergency exists. Mesquakies often interpret such refusals as indifference to their welfare.

The second shortcoming is an almost total lack of medical education. Past and present efforts in connection with Red Cross home-nursing training programs have contributed greatly but those efforts have scarcely begun to fill the need.

The third shortcoming of the present system concerns the old people. The older members of the community are, more often than not, cared for by their families. But in cases where there are no relatives or where the relatives are themselves penniless, the old people must make a painful choice. They may choose to remain on the settlement and live out their last years in deplorable circumstances (this is the choice which is most often made) or they can

apply for admittance to a public institution and live those last years in a totally alien world, removed from the familiarity of their people and their home.

A small clinic, with a full-time nurse and five or six available beds for emergencies and for the aged would be an adequate solution.

Government buildings, now unused, could be made available and would require but little repair. Perhaps the tribe could manage to provide the costs of food for the aged who would live at the clinic. The tribe could not provide the money necessary for the initial furnishing of the clinic nor could it provide the wages of the nurse for the foreseeable future.

Such a clinic would make available immediate emergency treatment. The nurse would be in a position to judge the seriousness of the illnesses and the doctor, on the word of the nurse, would of course attend to true emergencies. The element of security that parents and patients would feel on receiving this immediate attention in the place of the present, to them apparent, indifference would in itself have significant effect. Also, the aged could be housed in the clinic where sufficient heat and nourishing food would be available to them and they would also be close to the people they know and trust. And finally, the nurse would be able to spend part of her time supervising health education, working through the women's groups of the community.

It would be desirable that the clinic be so set up that it truly "belongs" to the people. That would have to mean that a tribal body would have to have the right to hire and fire the nurse and to enter into contract with the attending physician. It is of course presumed that the nurse and doctor will be subject to the licensing requirements of the state.

The common factor running through the shortcomings of the present system is that modern medicine remains, in the eyes of the Mesquakies, fundamentally the "white man's" and therefore is a part of the whole white world which so often creates trouble for Mesquakies. Until the medical

care offered Mesquakies comes to be seen as their own, no service offered by outside agencies will solve this health problem in that basic dimension.

Education

Each year 125 to 135 Mesquakie children attend grade school in the federally-operated school in the community. Another 25 to 35 attend the eighth grade and high school in nearby Tama under government contract with the Tama school board. Both schools are offering good education to the children.

But the Mesquakies feel that educational facilities are seriously threatened by an alleged, imminent federal "dumping" of this responsibility. The problem in this area is not to correct an imperfection primarily, although minor improvements are possible, but rather to preserve good and wanted service. The discontent here is that the present facilities are felt to be threatened.

The first education, in the sense white men think of the word, was offered to Mesquakies in 1880. A school was built by the federal government and, since the government did not have the legal right to employ force, attendance was voluntary. The student body never exceeded 10. In 1898, soon after authority over the Mesquakies was resumed by the federal government, a boarding school was built in nearby Toledo. Attempts were made to make attendance compulsory and there resulted a bitter conflict, both within the tribe and between the tribe and the government. After a number of years, the people made a rather sudden about-face and from that time on they have felt the education of their children to be highly important. A new school was built in the community in 1912 and the Toledo school was converted to a sanitorium. The school again moved to new quarters on the settlement during the late 1930's.

Intermittently, through the last 15 years, there have been attempts to close the grade school and have Mesquakie children attend nearby public schools. In the early 1930's arrangements were made with Montour, a community

8 miles west, but Mesquakies resisted sending their children there and after 3 years the school on the settlement was re-opened.

Mesquakies feel quite strongly that their community should continue to have its own grade school. Educators, if familiar with Mesquakie ways and with the relations between the Mesquakie community and nearby towns, would agree. In the first place, 75% of Mesquakie children cannot speak English when they first enter school and the language never ceases to be a learned second language. But more important, Mesquakie ways are fundamentally non-competitive. Mesquakie children avoid putting themselves above fellow pupils by reciting at every opportunity. White teachers who teach only Mesquakies soon come to learn this and adapt their teaching techniques to the Mesquakie notions of proper behavior. But white teachers, teaching mostly white children and only a few Mesquakies would tend not to become aware of the reasons for this "strange" behavior. Hence Mesquakie children would seem to compare unfavorably with the white children. The children, both Mesquakie and white, would not fail to catch their teacher's judgment and that would undermine the self-confidence of Mesquakie children.

There is every indication that Mesquakie children do very well in their own school and that they acquire an education equal to that of children in Iowa's rural schools generally. There are likewise a number of indications that this level of performance drops sharply when the children enter Tama High School. That drop is undoubtedly a result of the tensions and misunderstandings experienced by the pupils in their relations with their teachers and with their white fellow-students in spite of the sympathetic and understanding efforts of the educators.

The sending of Mesquakie children to the white high school is probably justified by reasons of economy and for the experience the Mesquakie young people do get there, both good and bad, of the white world. But it is wholly necessary that the initial, fundamental education of these children be provided in their own school, with fellow Mesquakie children and under teachers who have adjusted their

teaching methods to the needs of the Mesquakie pupils.

There are two minor shortcomings of the present educational system. The school facilities are overcrowded but this is a simple matter; and there is at present, no opportunity for the pupils to get the beginnings of the skills they will need in their future jobs.

The single major imperfection of the present system is like the situation in respect to health: Mesquakies have absolutely no word in the running of the school. The school "belongs" to the white men. Concrete steps should be taken by responsible officials to give responsibilities to the tribe and it should be the aim of those officials that in the future the tribe receive the same responsibilities school boards normally have.

Educational expense is the bulk of present federal expenditures in this community. Each year $40,000 to $45,000 is spent. If a school tax were charged against the Mesquakies, it would amount to about $3,000. The county or the state could not reasonably be expected to make up the difference between that tax and the school expenses. Mesquakie education, hence, is an item that will continue to be subsidized for the foreseeable future. If the subsidy were to be stopped, the Mesquakie school would have to close and a normal school tax would be assessed. That would mean that the level of Mesquakie education would undoubtedly drop.

Recreation

There is no recreation center in the Mesquakie community but the problem has been partially solved by the people. Mesquakie veterans of World War II have formed an American Legion Post and have built, with the financial help of the tribe, a meeting place. On Sunday evenings the building is open to everyone and Mesquakies of all ages gather. The building is small and inadequate for the whole community but 50 to 100 people are always present on those occasions. Sometimes there is a special event like a party for a departing or returning serviceman; always there is "Indian" dancing, "squaw-dice" games, and general merriment. The veterans were thinking in the summer of 1953

of ways to get a building which would be large enough for everyone. There are unused government buildings which could be remodeled to serve this purpose.

The Mesquakie community, like all communities is subject to divisions and conflicts within the group. Besides this, the community is living in subordination to a larger society which believes itself superior and in such instances the minority group often comes to half-believe in the larger group's superiority too. For both these reasons, the community needs every opportunity to get together to feel its unity and bolster one another's spirits. Hence recreation plays a vital role, more than mere diversion, for the members of the Mesquakie community.

Welfare Aids

Mesquakie individuals are eligible for the same welfare aids as other Iowans. The sole special arrangement at present deals with Tama County's share in these expenses; that share is assumed by the state in the case of aid to dependent children and old age assistance.

Payments to Mesquakies for welfare purposes add up to roughly one-tenth of the payments in Tama County while the Mesquakie population is about one-twentieth. That heavy case-load is viewed as a possible threat by county officials and taxpayers since they have no effective guarantee that this load will not be forced on them. Annual payments to Mesquakies total about $28,000. The county's potential share would be $7,000. At present the county's expense is only $1,200 and this is being paid under protest. The anxiety county officials and taxpayers feel is one of the main factors which create tensions between the Mesquakie community and the surrounding white towns.

It is only because the present set-up does create these tensions that the arrangement is an area of discontent. The problem is to arrive at a relatively permanent arrangement which is no longer a possible threat to the county and which is just to Mesquakies.

The Community's Income

To all outward appearances, this is a poor community but in some ways these appearances are deceptive. The community's income is low (earned annual income averages some where between $1,000 and $2,000 per family) but the effects of this are lessened by three factors which are peculiar to this community as compared to white towns; Mesquakies are relatively indifferent to many of the material needs which demand such a large share of the income of the average white family. Mesquakies have no personal expense in connection with their land; there is no rent or mortgage and the tribe pays the taxes on all the land by leasing a part of it. And, finally Mesquakie notions of generosity make it unnecessary for an individual to lay up a nest egg in anticipation of the next crisis; if there is a death, Mesquakies give a bit of money to the family to help them, or if a man is out of a job temporarily, his relatives help him out unquestioningly as they would be helped if the situation were reversed.

So while the community is poor, it is not eking out a bare subsistance in "grinding poverty." Mesquakies, like everyone, want more money. But the problem is not as pressing as it might first appear.

The Mesquakies are a community of laborers. This is a matter of choice on the part of the people. They have never taken to farming or business enterprise. Whatever increase in income does come about in the future will spring overwhelmingly from increased job opportunities and the acquiring of additional skills in industrial work.

Today there is a shortage of work within a radius of 20 miles and, as a result, Mesquakies commute daily or weekly to jobs up to 100 miles away. There are about 150 workers in the community of which about 70% are employed, part-time or full-time, throughout the year. There are Mesquakies presently employed in Marshalltown, Cedar Rapids, Waterloo, Des Moines, Davenport, Moline, Rock Island, and other nearby towns.

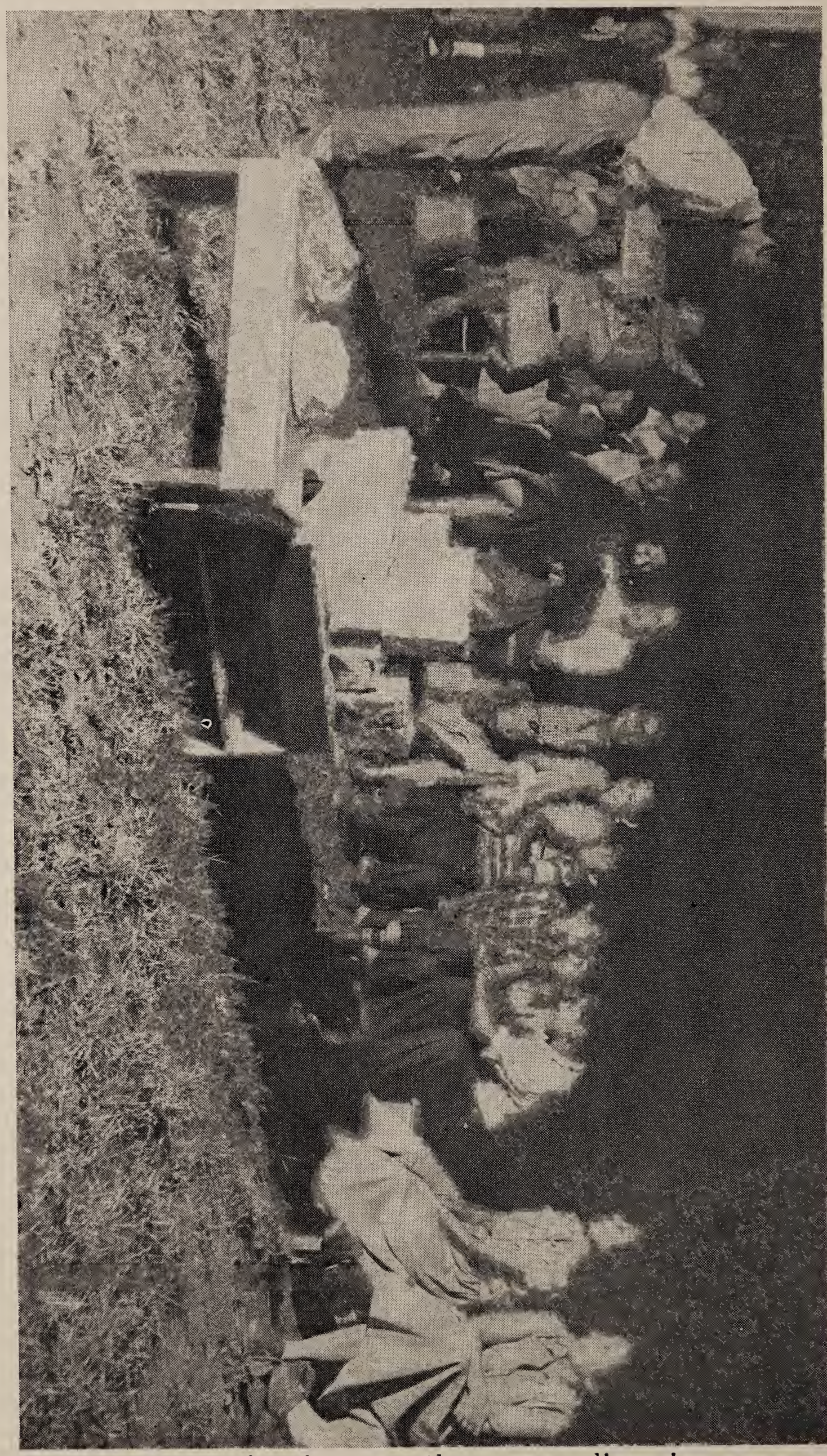
Throughout the history of the Mesquakie community in Iowa it has often been assumed by interested white men

that the community's basic income should be derived from farming. This is an unsound notion for two reasons: the land is marginal and could support no more than four or five families even if farmed maximally and most Mesquakies are simply indifferent to farming. Once there were about 1,000 acres under cultivation but shifts in the course of the Iowa River increased the flooding and the depression made farming unprofitable so Mesquakies came more and more to rely on wage labor. Today about 350 acres are cultivated and farming is an important income for only four families. No great improvement could be effected without undertaking the expensive task of straightening the course of the river to reduce flooding. With this expenditure, and assuming a maximum increase in farming, the overall picture of the community's income would still not be substantially altered.

The present trend is overwhelmingly in favor of wage labor as against farming. Undoubtedly Mesquakies' wage income will continue to rise as more and better jobs are opened up. Undoubtedly, too, there will be an increase in farm income but despite that increase the proportion of the community's income derived from farming will probably be less in the future than it is today.

During the depression, a small cannery was built and operated under WPA funds for the use of the Mesquakie families. This helped stretch the limited money incomes. The cannery still exists and should be reopened. It is difficult to estimate the cost of repair and the cost of replacement of equipment. Such expenses may or may not be within the means of the community. The reopening of the cannery would make it economically worthwhile for families to cultivate larger garden plots. On-going operating expenses could probably be made by the assessment and sale of a percentage of the goods canned.

There are three other minor sources of income: The income from a tribal fund, held in the United States Treasury, is distributed to some Mesquakies, generally children, semi-annually; payments are about $5.00. The annual Mesquakie pow wow is not primarily an economic effort but it



Recreation is more than mere diversion

—Photo Cedar Rapids Gazette

presents an opportunity for Mesquakies to earn $25 to $30 each once a year. Many Mesquakie families derive a bit of income from the manufacture and sale of souvenir items but the time required for manufacture is out of all proportion to the money that can be gotten for the articles.

On the whole, it can be said that tribal income is a relatively minor problem, and a problem that can be expected to largely take care of itself as Mesquakies continue to acquire new industrial skills.

That is not to say the community will ever be very prosperous. Mesquakie notions of generosity fortunately make personal wealth unnecessary for a full and secure life in this community. And Mesquakie notions about the immorality of one Mesquakie putting himself above another prohibits the personal competitiveness which is required for prosperity as the white man knows it.

A Postscript

It is part of the nature of man, apparently, to dwell on the shortcomings of his life. This tendency pervades the thinking of both Mesquakies and whites throughout the history of the Iowa Mesquakie community and to no lesser extent today. It is a bad tendency because it leads to the impression that somehow the side-by-side existence of the two groups, Mesquakie and white, is a very great problem. That, it certainly is not.

The areas of present Mesquakie discontent are in no instance deep, fundamental conflicts of interest. They are but the inevitable minor "kinks" that must always crop up in the course of imperfect human history.

Nor are these areas of discontent of major magnitude when compared with the positive aspects of Mesquakie life. It requires, however, on the part of both Mesquakies and whites, conscious effort to keep these "problems" in their true perspective.

When you come right down to it, the greatest "problem" the Mesquakie community has is to get people to stop looking at the community life as if there were something basically wrong with it.

IV. RIGHTS AND DUTIES

Indians are not, as is generally supposed, "wards" of the government. According to the late Benjamin Cohen, national authority on Indian Law, wardship is a fiction that has been invented by government officials to justify interferences in Indian groups' affairs when such interferences have no Congressional authorization. Cohen maintains that wardship has never had a legal basis and that it is clear from recent court rulings that the courts today have recognized the fact. Indians are citizens of the United States and of the States in which they live. As such they have all the rights and responsibilities shared by other citizens. Cohen goes on to say that existence of a federal budget for American Indians and a federal bureaucracy serving Indias no more makes the Indians "wards" than do the federal expenditures and bureaus serving veterans or women or children or labor or seamen.

The essence is this: there are special laws benefiting Indians and there are special laws disenabling Indians. Some of these laws are good and others bad; all are legal. But **in all other areas,** those areas not explicitly provided for by acts of legislatures, Indians have the same rights and responsibilities as all citizens.

The special laws relating to Mesquakies are four. First, the federal government assumes financial and administrative responsibility for two community services, education and health. Second, the State of Iowa assumes a share of those costs of Social Security benefits which would normally be borne by the county under the federal Categorical Aids program. Third, there still remains a state law which forbids sale of alcoholic liquors to Indians (similar to the recently-repealed federal law). Fourth, Mesquakies, as individuals and as a community, pay all federal taxes and all state taxes but they are exempt from some county taxes, most importantly the school tax.

In all other areas Mesquakies have the same legal rights and responsibilities as other citizens. However, in some instances, especially dealing with state services to citizens, these rights have never been established by usage.

"Dependency" Through Different Eyes

The Mesquakies themselves have shifting and conflicting feelings about their relations with the federal government. On the one hand, they have grave misgivings as to their ability to cope with all the complexities of full responsibility for their community and are fully aware that, financially, they cannot bear their own weight. This feeling is generally voiced as, "The government promised to take care of the Indians forever—we do not know how to do these things." At the same time, Mesquakies resent the constant irritant of an outside force having full authority to decide matters affecting Mesquakie welfare. They often say, "The government doesn't care what we think—we're only Indians."

White men—government officials and private citizens—have similarly mixed feelings. On the one hand there is the feeling of guilt and a desire to correct past wrongs in dealings with the Indians. On the other there is the belief that continued special treatment of Indians is unjust to taxpayers and harmful to the Indians themselves.

No aspect of present-day Indian affairs is less understood and more important than these complex relationships and habits of thought which have generally been called "dependency" or the Great White Father complex. The incomplete understanding that is possible today, however, indicates that an important distinction be made: Mesquakies are today **financially** dependent upon the federal government in that there are federally-financed services to the community, and Mesquakies are **administratively** dependent upon officials of the federal government for the running of those services.

A close look at the merits and shortcomings of these services will show that continued federal responsibility for the **financing** of those necessary community services is unavoidable for the forseeable future (and one can justify those expenditures in terms of a rough sort of equity in the same sense as one justifies expenditures by the Veterans Administration, for instance). A close look will also

show that federal **administration** of these services, rather than tribal responsibility, is doing great damage to the Mesquakie sense of self-confidence and should and could be stopped.

"Withdrawal," A Federal Aim and a Mesquakie Fear

The Indian Service has in recent years, under economy pressures from Congress, adopted the policy of "withdrawal"—the complete and early dropping of all federal responsibilities toward Indians. All resolutions from subcommittees in Congress, all directives from Indian Service offices in Washington, all concrete changes in the handling of affairs in Indian communities, all these things point in the single direction—withdrawal. It would be difficult to appreciate fully the amount of anxiety these moves are raising in the Indian communities across the land.

At the same time, there has been an increased interest in Indian affairs by state governments. It has happened repeatedly that a state government has set up a commission on Indian affairs and that commission, after study, has requested federal money to administer the federal services. These requests generally meet with acceptance because they fit in with the federal policy of withdrawal, being the first step in that direction, and the transfer of jurisdiction is accomplished—almost invariably over the opposition of the Indians themselves.[1] But then trouble develops. Once Indian Service personnel have removed themselves and been replaced by state personnel, the State commission learns that it is to be threatened each year by economy-minded Congressmen who want to cut out the appropriation and leave the state to pay the bill.

It would be very bad if the financial load for Mesquakie community services were to descend on state and county taxpayers. The attitudes of these people toward Mesquakies are vital to the continued well-being of the Mesquakies.

---

1. Of recent years it has become almost an item of faith that, for some as-yet-to-be explained reason, the transfer of jurisdiction to the states will wonderfully solve the problems. But the Indians in Maine, who have been under state jurisdiction always, have much the same problems no closer to solution.

It is only human nature that, if this financial load were to be shifted to these taxpayers, they would (since it is not very satisfying to "blame" some unknown figure in Washington) tend unconsciously to blame the Mesquakies.

It is equally clear, however, that without political help from their neighbors Mesquakies will not be long able to delay that mistake. Indeed, a transfer of administrative jurisdiction, initiated in this instance by the Indian Service, was almost effected in respect to the Mesquakie grade school last year. It failed when officials of the State Department of Public Instruction refused to accept the jurisdiction when they learned of Mesquakie opposition to the plan.

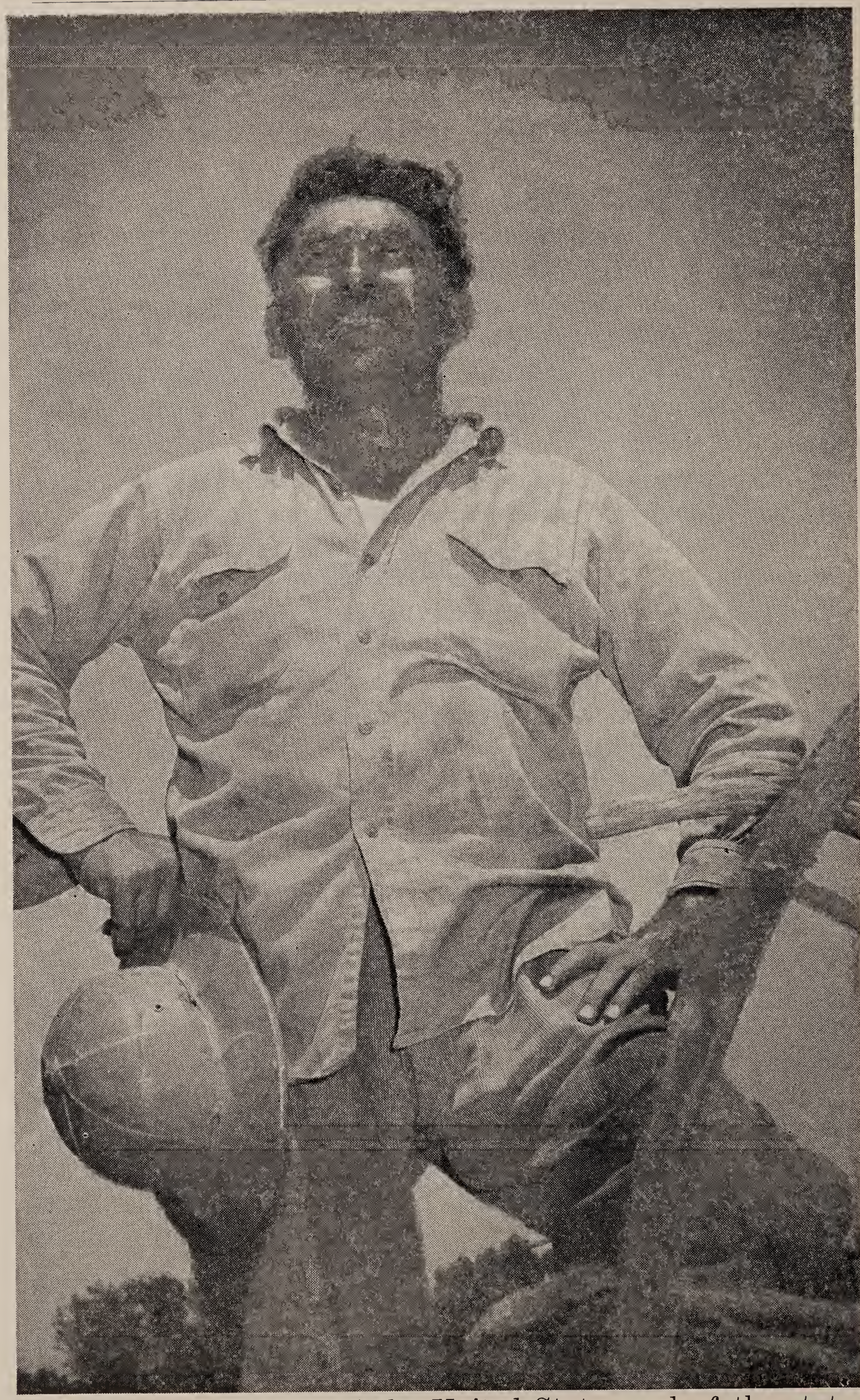
Mesquakies are opposed to withdrawal. They call withdrawal "dumping" or breaking the "promises."

Dollars and Cents

Basically, most debates about withdrawal resolve themselves to a matter of money and who is going to pay it. Future necessary annual expenses in the Mesquakie community will total about $67,000. This includes $40,000 for the running of the grade school, $8,000 for high school tuitions, $7,000 for general health care under the contract doctor, $5,000 for proposed clinic, and $7,000 to cover the difference between county payments to Mesquakies for welfare purposes and county income from Mesquakie taxes. (All figures are approximate).

In no instance has it ever been seriously suggested by responsible officials that the responsibility for **financing** and the responsibility for **administering** the services are separable. The fact is that the two matters are separable practically and that the separation must be made if the present impasse is to be resolved with justice to all the parties involved.

It should be apparent that Mesquakies cannot assume, in the foreseeable future, the financial burden of those necessary services to the community. It should be equally apparent that Mesquakies can learn to administer their affairs only by taking over real authority. Having such



Indians are citizens of the United States and of the states in which they live.

—Photo Des Moines Register

authority would effect a substantial change in Mesquakie attitudes toward the "white man's" medicine and education.

At present everyone is unhappy. Congress and the Indian Service want to get out; Mesquakies are anxious that they might be dumped; the county is nervous that the financial burden might descend on it; and the state might likewise fear new burdens. The problem is to arrive at a just arrangement which will not evoke all those anxieties and which will be relatively permanent as the Mesquakie community itself is permanent.

A Possible Solution

One possible solution is a permanent fund, appropriated by Congress and administered by a law firm selected by the tribe; the yearly income from that fund would be used to pay the annual expenses of services to the Mesquakie community. A fund of about $1,500,000 should earn the necessary $67,000 a year.

Starting such a fund could not be accomplished in a matter of a few months. It would involve steps to set up Mesquakie authority over areas of present services. The fund would be put into effect with, and only with, Mesquakie approval by referendum. There would have to be a procedure allowing for modification or for a reversion to the present system if the people decided the new system was not working out as they had hoped. Perhaps the fund could be put into effect in about 2 years from the time responsible persons began working toward that end.

Such a solution should meet with the approval of Mesquakies, once it is fully understood, for it would remove forever the anxiety of living at the whim of sometimes generous, sometimes niggardly Congresses. Further, the solution would not conflict with the strong Mesquakie belief that the present services are a federal responsibility in virtue of promises made to the people by the government. The solution would not alter that responsibility nor would it mean severing of relations with the federal government.

The solution proposed would remove the threat seen by the county in the possibility of a federal "dumping" of present financial aid. And there is nothing in the plan contrary to the interests of the state.

V. MESQUAKIES AS A RACIAL MINORITY

The racial minorities of our country (but not the religious minorities) ask but one thing of the society at large: the right to go and come without hindrance and subject only to the laws applying to all citizens. Mesquakie individuals ask this of the society too but as a community they also ask another thing: the right to be, in some senses, permanently apart. In preceding sections we have dealt with that second request. Here we will be dealing with barriers which hinder the going and coming of Mesquakies as individuals and without reference to his membership in a group with a distinct way of life.

Iowa has the good fortune of being free of the formal barriers which hinder racial groups generally and of being relatively free of the informal barriers which spring from the race-prejudice of individuals. The Mesquakie who moves away from the immediate vicinity of his community only rarely meets with prejudice and in this he is fortunate.

But there remains a formal barrier against Mesquakies, a state law which bars sale of alcohol to Indians. The law parallels a similar federal law which was recently repealed.

The state law is applied with absolute rigidity in the vicinity of the Mesquakie community and irregularly or not at all in areas of the state more remote. The law, as all such laws, has little effect upon the availability, through illegal channels, of alcohol to Indians. Indeed, the effect of the law is to encourage bootlegging and to force the Mesquakies to drink the "evidence" as quickly as possible and thereby to increase drunkenness.

The law has a symbolic importance to Mesquakies all out of proportion to the actual importance of obtaining alcohol. It is a constant reminder of an inferior status in the society. There is every indication that the law may actually increase the consumption of alcohol since the very act of drinking takes on a note of defiance.

The law has the bad effect of forcing drinking in the

area of the Mesquakie settlement. The original founders of this Mesquakie community entered into an agreement among themselves that there would be no drinking on the tribal land and the people still feel that this is the best way. But local law-enforcement officials will permit no drinking by the Mesquakies away from the settlement area and they do not have sufficient manpower to police the Mesquakie community. Hence quite often, the young men drink in the community in violation of the feelings of their elders. When disturbances do occur, as they occasionally must when young men get too much in their cups, they happen in the community where there is no formal law-enforcement and therefore no check on the disturbance. Instances of disorder in the Mesquakie community almost invariably involve drinking.

If the state law were abolished, Mesquakies could drink leisurely in the town taverns, away from the Mesquakie community and under the same law-enforcement which applies to all citizens. There would no longer be this constant, irritating reminder of an inferior status. Under those conditions, the amount of drinking would almost certainly be reduced rather than increased.

VI. THE HUMAN ELEMENT

Throughout this discussion we have been talking, directly or indirectly, about imperfect human beings, white and Indian, living out their lives as members of the two groups and trying to make the best of it. All are heirs to a long history in which the two groups have lived side-by-side with continual, important contacts. But those frequent contacts have always been, and still are, essentially superficial.

It is as if there were a great canyon between these peoples, a canyon whose width made the goings and comings of those on the opposite side look small and strange. That canyon is not unbridged and there are ceaseless crossings back and forth. But there is, as it were, an unspoken agreement that all men seal their tongues when they cross, that they go about their buying and selling quickly and return

to "their own side" to resume their interrupted lives. Both Mesquakies and whites seem to have accepted that unspoken agreement as being in the nature of things.

An attempt to understand the joys and discontents of the Mesquakie community must sense this silent going and coming; an attempt to understand must sense that silence or fail. If the Mesquakies and their neighbors do have a difficult problem, this is it. It is this silence which complicates all the discontents we have mentioned.

That silence gives rise to the oversimplified and uncorrected pictures which each group invents to represent "those others." Since there are tensions between the groups, those fuzzy pictures are most often unkind. "Two Tama Mesquakies went on the war path Saturday night and ended up in the county jail.....," runs a local news story; or "Indian is Held in Mink Theft," says the headline in a Des Moines paper; as if being Indian somehow accounts for drunkenness and theft. And, on the other side, a Mesquakie fails to make the high school team; "They just don't give Indians a chance," say the Mesquakies.

Such are the pictures each group creates of the strangers across the canyon. Those pictures reinforce an undertone of mutual hostility—a latent tension that flares into the open with the unavoidable brushes that must enter into the day-to-day lives of men.

The need is for some persons, some groups, to take it upon themselves to spend many months just talking—talking quietly to the whites about Mesquakies and to Mesquakies about whites and in the end getting whites and Mesquakies to talk a bit more to each other. It is not a matter of gigantic engineering to erase the chasm for there is nothing really evil in being different. It is a matter of bringing each group to a degree of understanding about why the other group behaves in such "strange" ways. It is a matter of telling each group about the other's culture.

As an example, it is often said by whites that Mesquakies can't save, that they throw their money around; the

truth of the matter is that Mesquakies attach much more importance to generosity than do whites and they would view saving, when others have need, as fundamentally indecent. It is often said too, by Mesquakies, that white men know how to "get things done"; the truth is that white men are organized upward and downward in a huge pyramid of bosses and bosses of bosses and Mesquakies are organized in a thoroughly level manner with no bosses at all. Hence white communities are built for innovation while changes can occur in Mesquakie life only when no one in the group disagrees. So white men do "gets things done" but this is not to the discredit of Mesquakies and there are certain psychological advantages for Mesquakies in a way of life in which there is not the ceaseless compulsion to "do things."

There is no reason why white men cannot understand and appreciate these things of Mesquakies, and Mesquakies of whites. But they do not understand today and someone must make the first step. One can imagine the almost literal sigh of relief that would rise as both groups came to realize that "those others" are neither incomprehensible nor quite so bad after all.

There are two parts of the present unkind pictures which are overridingly important. One is the notion that Mesquakies, or at least Mesquakie ways, will just "go away." White men believe this without question or exception; indeed, it is necessary for them to believe it since the present situation erroneously seems, to them, intolerable and no other solution is apparent. Naturally that belief white men hold stamps everything Mesquakie as, by necessity, inferior. Mesquakies cannot but be aware of these white notions and they both resent them and half belive them. The notion has guided all white actions and some Mesquakie's actions throughout the last 300 years.

But the notion flies in the face of the fact that the Mesquakie community is both strong and growing and, so long as the community exists, many of the things most basic to the Mesquakie way of life simply cannot be changed (leav-

ing aside whether they should be); it has caused policy to be directed toward hastening a change that was thought to be inevitable but which was in fact literally impossible to engineer. If the end sought by interested white men in the past was impossible, it is small wonder that so much past activity was ineffectual or worse. It should prove quite a relief to responsible officials if they recognized that future frustrations of attempting the impossible were completely unnecessary.

The second aspect of the present unkind picture each group holds is the present pre-occupation with "problems." Both Mesquakies and whites have become to view each other's very existence as basically and unavoidably a problem.

Since Mesquakies are the underdogs, their interpretation of the "problem" tends to be shifting and mixed with self-doubt, blaming themselves and, at the same time, the white man. Insofar as they do see the problem as caused by white men alone, they feel helpless in overcoming it.

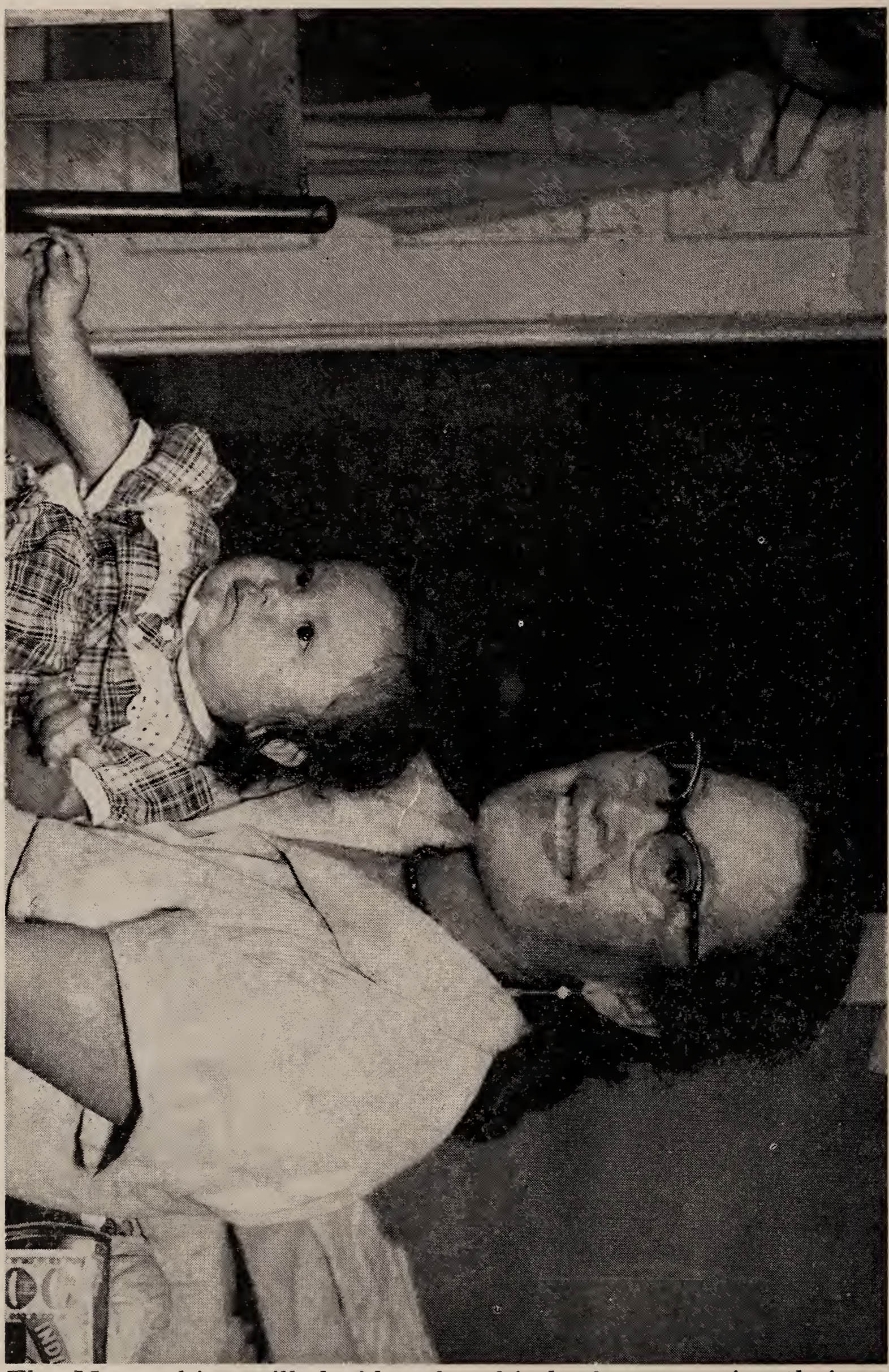
But white men are on top and they are serenely confident about their interpretation of the "problem" and therefore they keep up a steady din, consciously or unconsciously, for Mesquakies to "do something about it." This is a gigantic psychological burden for Mesquakies and the net effect on them is to increase their mistaken feeling that maybe there is something basically wrong with them, else they would be able to see more clearly just what it was that the white people expected them to do. Feeling thus personally inadequate, they become rigidly afraid of doing anything for if they try and fail that very failure will "prove" their self-doubts and no men can stand too much of that. Feeling thus personally inadequate, they become effectively inadequate.

It is precisely here that so many of the actions of white men to help the Mesquakies hit the rocks. It has happened repeatedly: A sympathetic person comes into the comunity. He "investigates" until he has gotten the people sufficiently edgy then he presents an elaborate solution to "the

problem." The atmosphere has become electric with a "this is the day" tenseness. And at just that point, the Mesquakies freeze. They fear failure and they curse themselves for that fear. And generally, the white man becomes indignant that his time has been so wasted so he flies off the scene and leaves the Mesquakies to live as best they can with the self-accusation and the memory.

In short, the present need is not to get things stimulated; the need is to get people to relax. Both whites and Mesquakies must step back a minute and then start out anew. They must relax and enjoy the truly enjoyable things of their own and of the other's life. They must willfully relegate all the so-called problems to their proper, subordinate place in the overall picture.

And until these things are done, it would be foolish to expect substantial improvements in those few, minor areas where there are "real" discontents.



The Mesquakies will decide what kind of community their children will have.

—Photo Cedar Rapids Gazette

VII. THE CHILDREN'S CHILDREN

We cannot plan the Mesquakie's future for them. They will decide what kind of community their children will have. But we can imagine how the Mesquakie might be living a generation from now.

The next generation will still speak Mesquakie, and they will still live in the Mesquakie way; we have no right to change that, and probably could not if we tried. These men and women will still be easy-going; they will still share with each other in time of need; they will still be a group of equals, with no bosses and nobody being bossed.

We hope that the next generation will worry less about their relations to the communities around them, and to white society in general. Then they will no longer be bothered by feelings of inadequacy; they will relax and be themselves.

The next generation will not be prosperous, as that is counted in money. Because they will share with each other, instead of trying to get ahead of each other, they will not get rich. But this will not make them feel bad. They do not want to be rich, and they believe that thinking about money too much is a little disgusting.

But the next generation we hope will no longer be considered a financial burden on the country. It will not have to depend on the whims of Congresses and yearly appropriations. In short, the Mesquakie will not have to worry about the rest of us, and the rest of us will not need to worry about the Mesquakie.

This probable Mesquakie community of the next generation would be running on its own steam—but at its own speed, and in its own way.

INDIAN YOUTH ATTENDING TAMA HIGH SCHOOL

Front row left to right—Steven Bear, Talbert Davenport, Dennis Keahna, Bob Waseskuk, Jimmy Ward, George Buffalo, Rolland Youngbear, Wilford Blackcloud, Nathan Bear. **Second Row**—Iola Snow, Frances Wanatee, Geneva Poweshiek, Aurelia Scott, Marjorie Buffalo, Elizabeth Wanatee, Diana Morgan, Sylvia Morgan, Geraldine Davenport, Alma Youngbear. **Third Row**—Leo Morgan, Jerry Youngbear, Virgil Slick, Gerald Youngbear, Edward Davenport, Chris Youngbear, Gailey Morgan, Marvel Mauskemo, Leo Keahna. **Fourth Row** — Joyce Mitchell, Sandra Mitchell, Naomi Slick, Bernardine Davenport, Marjorie Kapayou, Betty Keahna, Etta Davenport, Barbara Waseskuk.

CHAMPIONSHIP DANCERS

of the 1953 Mesquakie Indian Pow Wow which is held the third week in August each year.